

Roles and Responsibilities of the INTOSAI WGEA Working Bodies

The INTOSAI WGEA is a large, volunteer organization with a number of distinct bodies and players, each with associated responsibilities. These include the Chair and Secretariat, the full WGEA (the Assembly), the Steering Committee, Project Leaders and project subcommittees, and the regional working groups on environmental auditing.

The WGEA realizes its vision and mandate by implementing the triennial work plan and the various goals and actions (projects) it contains. Projects can be of a variety of types and include guidance papers, website pages, surveys, meetings, coordinated audits, *Greenlines*, and others. It is the dedication and effort of individual SAIs, who lead and support projects as committee leaders, project leaders, and subcommittee members, that make the WGEA work. They are drawn from the entire WGEA membership, not just the members of the steering committee.

The full WGEA, with 69 members, is arguably too large as an assembly to be involved in day to day management and decision-making. While according to INTOSAI procedures, the full WGEA is required to formally approve guidance documents prepared by its members, the triennial work plan, and other important documents, meetings of the WGEA focus on information sharing and capacity building.

In real terms, the Steering Committee is the “day to day” management and decision-making body of the WGEA apparatus. Established in 2001, the SC is led by the Chair and Secretariat and includes regional coordinators, several project leaders, and other interested SAIs. We strive for a good regional balance. The Steering Committee focuses its attention on both operational and strategic matters.

Regional working groups or networks (RWGEAs) exist in several of the INTOSAI regions. While they are independent from WGEA decision-making, they can play a crucial role in fostering regional dialogue and coordination. Each regional body is led by a coordinating SAI.

Recently, the Steering Committee agreed to clarify the key roles and responsibilities for each of bodies these, with a view to strengthening the overall functioning of the WGEA. This document reflects both current and new roles and responsibilities.

Chair and Secretariat

Key Function: Overall management and oversight of the WGEA apparatus.

Key Responsibilities: (Undertaken in close cooperation with Steering Committee, project leaders, regional coordinators and members at large)

- Provides overall administrative support to all aspects of the WGEA
- Organizes WGEA and Steering Committee Meetings, in close cooperation with the host
- Leads development of the triennial work plan, establishes an overall project management system (including project specific work plans, roles, timetables and reporting for actions included in the work plan), and monitors work plan implementation
- Maintains and enhances the WGEA Web-site, including the Audits World Wide database
- Designs and undertakes the Survey on Environmental Auditing
- Communicates within and outside of the WGEA and INTOSAI membership
- Supports training and capacity building initiatives
- Summarizes progress and achievements (through Web-site and Chair’s Reports)

- Leads liaison and relationship building with INTOSAI bodies and external organizations
- Communicates with regional working groups on EA and supports their initiatives
- Manages the authoring, publication and translation of guidance materials and other projects
- Makes all preparations for presentation of the WGEA at the triennial INCOSAI Congress meetings.

WGEA Members

Key Function: Contribute to, comment on and approve draft and final guidance materials, work plans and other key documents and initiatives; Promote information exchange and capacity building.

Key Responsibilities of individual members:

- Can serve as project leaders and subcommittee members (see below)
- Support the development of projects by providing case studies, answering questionnaires, reviewing and commenting on documents
- Contribute to information exchange at meetings and participate in seminars

Key Responsibility of the Assembly:

- Approve all work plans, guidance documents, terms of reference, other products or proposals.

Regional Working Groups on EA

Key Function: Foster information exchange and capacity building and coordinate efforts at the regional level.

Key Responsibilities of Regional Coordinator:

- Serves as focal point for two-way exchange with WGEA
 - Provides regional perspective on global WGEA work plans, projects and actions
 - Provides global information and products to regional level
- Organizes meetings of regional members in close cooperation with the host
- Leads and coordinates development of regional work plans and associated actions where warranted (e.g. guidance for regional issues)
- Supports regional information gathering for the purposes of WGEA projects and its triennial survey
- Provides liaison with Regional Training Committees (RC), other regional INTOSAI bodies, and with regional external organizations
- Supports regional training and capacity building initiatives and provides or facilitates technical support to regional members
- Encourages cooperative audits (and may facilitate them)
- Participates as member of the Steering Committee (see responsibilities as below).

Steering Committee

Key function: Management committee of the WGEA, providing operational support and strategic direction.

Key Responsibilities:

- Considers and recommends work plan
- Approves overall project management system developed by Chair
- Reviews, advises on and approves project-specific work plans, progress reports and project drafts

- Provides strategic advice to Chair on initiatives related to long-term vision, relationship building, support to RWGEAs, etc.

Note: SC Members are expected to be actively involved throughout the three-year work plan period. This includes:

- To attend and contribute during all SC meetings
- To have consistent representation from meeting to meeting
- To respond to information requests and queries in between meetings
- To be a member of at least one project subcommittee.

Projects (Project Leaders and Subcommittees)

Key Function: Deliver high quality final product in accordance with established management system requirements.

Key Responsibilities of Project Leaders:

- Leads all aspects of a project (in cooperation with project subcommittee and SC) and assures technical accuracy
- Prepares project specific work plans
- Undertakes research and solicits information from SAIs as needed
- Assigns roles to and organizes consultations with the subcommittee
- Writes project drafts and stewards their revision and updating
- Prepares progress reports as requested
- Communicates with the Steering Committee and WGEA membership

Key Responsibilities of Subcommittee members:

- Review and comment on project work plans, progress reports and draft documents
- Assure technical accuracy of the project
- Potentially undertake research, writing or other tasks as requested by and agreed with the project leader.